

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS STATE 061563

E.O. 11652: N/A.

TAGS: MX, ELTN

SUBJECT: PRESIDIO COUNTY INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE
APPLICATION

1. AS EMBASSY MAY KNOW, PRESIDIO COUNTY TEXAS, HAS APPLIED TO DEPARTMENT FOR A PERMIT TO AUTHORIZE CONSTRUCTION OF AN INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE ACROSS RIO GRANDE BETWEEN PRESIDIO, TEXAS AND OJINAGA, CHIHUAHUA. THE ONLY EXISTING BRIDGE IN AREA IS PRIVATELY OWNED, AND IS REPRESENTED TO BE INADEQUATE BY SUPPORTERS OF PRESIDIO APPLICATION. BRIDGE OWNER, MR. FRANK DUPUY, HAS OBJECTED TO GRANTING OF PRESIDIO APPLICATION.

2. AS PART OF ITS APPLICATION, PRESIDIO COUNTY HAS SUBMITTED A 1975 AGREEMENT BETWEEN COUNTY AND GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, TO ESTABLISH TECHNICAL CONDITIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE. AGREEMENT SIGNED FOR MEXICO BY ING. RODOLFO FELIX VALDES, SUBSECRETARY A, BY EXPRESS DESIGNATION OF THE SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS.

3. DEPARTMENT PLANS TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARING IN WASHINGTON ON MARCH 25, PRINCIPALLY TO HEAR REPRESENTATIVES OF
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PRESIDIO COUNTY BRIDGE OWNER DUPUY. A MAJOR ISSUE AT HEARING, AND IN FORMULATING DEPARTMENT'S DECISION ON PRESIDIO APPLICATION, WILL BE VIEWS OF MEXICAN AUTHORITIES.

4. PRESIDIO REPRESENTS THAT CONCERNED MEXICAN AUTHORITIES ARE DISSATISFIED WITH PRESENT BRIDGE OPERATION AND SUPPORT PRESIDIO APPLICATION. CONTRACT CITED PARA 2 APPEARS TO SUPPORT THIS VIEW. DEPARTMENT HAS ALSO RECEIVED SEVERAL LETTERS FROM LOCAL OFFICIALS AND CIVIC AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS IN OJINAGA AREA IN SUPPORT OF PRESIDIO. FURTHER, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT ON MARCH 12, GROUP OF MEXICAN CITIZENS BLOCKED TRAFFIC AT MEXICAN END OF EXISTING BRIDGE FOR SEVERAL HOURS TO PROTEST HIGH TOLLS AND DETERIORATED CONDITION OF EXISTING BRIDGE. HOWEVER, AS YET DEPARTMENT HAS NOT RECEIVED OFFICIAL MEXICAN COMMUNICATION PROMISED BY PRESIDIO TO CONFIRM GOM SUPPORT FOR COUNTY.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTED TO CONTACT APPROPRIATE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES AND TO INFORM THEM OF CURRENT STATUS OF PRESIDIO APPLICATION. EMBASSY SHOULD ENCOURAGE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES TO PROVIDE ANY EXPRESSIONS OF VIEWS WHICH GOM WISHES DEPARTMENT TO CONSIDER IN DECIDING ON PRESIDIO APPLICATION. ANY VIEWS WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF RECEIVED PRIOR TO MARCH 25 HEARING. KISSINGER

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